



**Summary: Workshop no. 22 Non-formal education is sustainable**

Active Citizenship in Europe the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2009, Nordic association for adult learning, NVL

The workshop focused on popular education and citizens' participation as the key to a sustainable community development. In the Nordic countries we have a strong tradition for both of these issues. How can we – at both the local and national level – develop and improve the dialogue between citizens and the local authorities and how does improving knowledge help creating political pressure towards a more sustainable future? How can we inspire each other across Europe? The questions were illustrated through the following presentations:

- Kirsten Paaby, the Ideas Bank, Norway ([www.idebanken.no](http://www.idebanken.no)). She focused on the United Nations Decade for Education for Sustainable Development, underlining the role of the civil society and lifelong learning. She illustrated the role by giving Nordic and European examples.
- Carl Eneroth The Nordic Arena ([www.arenanordenkurser.org](http://www.arenanordenkurser.org)) presented “The Nordic Countries and the climate policy” – a study circle prospect from the Nordic Association and the Nordic Adult Education Associations,
- “Sustainable Development now!” is a study circle prospect from The Workers Adult Education Association in Sweden ([www.abf.se](http://www.abf.se)) and was presented by Lena Nätt

After the presentations there was a dynamic so-called “speed dialogue” in pairs, where they reflected around the presentations related to their own practices and challenges when it comes to popular education and sustainable community development. The speed dialogue was summed up and further discussed in a circle. The message from the workshop and this final discussion is that it is important to define and demonstrate the importance of the role of civic society in a sustainable community. The responsibility and actions taken by individuals, families, organisations and companies in the local communities should be seen as much important steps as the global assemblies, conferences and meetings. Local, national and global authorities are to be aware of the importance of small, but important actions, and show up examples to encourage citizens to learn for and live a sustainable life both as individuals and as citizens in communities. Refer to the initiative mentioned by Kirsten Paaby in her introduction: The Transition Towns initiative in UK.

The participants decided to join a NVL-network sharing information, ideas and examples on sustainable learning and living. Do you want to know more about the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development? Look at [http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL\\_ID=27234&URL\\_DO=DO\\_TOPIC&URL\\_SECTION=201.html](http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=27234&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html) and [www.balanseakten.no](http://www.balanseakten.no) Do you want to know more about European initiatives that works with training and learning for community development and active citizenship look at <http://tl4cd.wordpress.com/>, [www.pepol.eu](http://www.pepol.eu) and [www.ceecn.net](http://www.ceecn.net)